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ABSTRACT

For homework to be effective, a clear, written policy should be developed that considers local needs, sound educational theories, and current research. This handbook is intended to assist school districts, particularly in Pennsylvania, in planning, developing, and implementing homework policies and guidelines. The booklet first briefly reviews the role of homework in education, then draws on the experiences of Pennsylvania's school districts to identify a number of critical factors that must be considered when developing homework policies. These factors include a consensus on homework's place in the educational process; identification of the roles of administrators, teachers, students, and parents; and procedures for policy implementation. A checklist of policy preparation activities and sample policies from three districts are also included. (PGD)

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Turning the Tide

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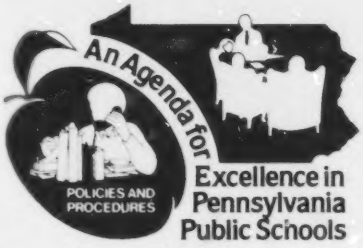
HOMEWORK

Policies and Guidelines



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Dick Thornburgh, Governor

Department of Education
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June 1984

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I. INTRODUCTION

Homework has been identified as a vital factor in increasing student achievement in almost all national and state reports on education. Those reports have urged state education departments and local school districts to establish firm, explicit, and demanding requirements for meaningful homework.

In Turning The Tide: An Agenda for Excellence in Pennsylvania Public Schools, Governor Dick Thornburgh called upon school districts to use homework to enhance, not merely to increase, the time students spend learning. He urged school districts to develop appropriate policies to assure that an adequate amount of out-of-class work is completed. Homework is another way to improve time spent on learning, but care must be taken to make homework assignments creative and challenging; nothing stifles learning as much as mindless "busywork." The State Board of Education takes the position that homework policies are best developed locally.

For homework to be effective, a clear written policy which takes into consideration local needs, sound educational theories and current research should be developed. This handbook is intended to assist school districts in planning, developing and implementing homework policies and guidelines. Guidelines for local policy development and sample policies are included.

II. IMPORTANCE OF HOMEWORK

In the wake of recent national commission and task force reports, Amitai Etzioni, a professor at George Washington University, has criticized the assumption that students are machines from which you get more output by increasing the input of books, teachers, and time. Etzioni argued, however, that the role of homework is pivotal, not because it provides more hours to pump information into pupils, but because it both encourages and measures the development of self-discipline and associated good working habits.

Etzioni stressed that by focusing on students' abilities to concentrate, to follow rules, to control impulses, to face and overcome stress, and to resist distractions, educators can nurture self-discipline, which in turn will improve academic skills and knowledge.[1] This summary of the benefits of homework is typical of current thought.

In Fifteen Thousand Hours, Michael Rutter reported on a study of the effectiveness of London inner city schools. He found that the most effective schools emphasized academic achievement, not only in some courses, tracks or classes, but in the entire school. An important factor in this achievement emphasis was the use of homework. Assigning homework was associated with better outcomes, and in the most effective schools, requiring homework was school policy.

The Governor of the Commonwealth, the Pennsylvania State Board of Education and the Department of Education (PDE) are in agreement with the predominant thought in the field of education that homework, properly handled, is a valuable adjunct to classroom learning. The PDE feels it is of such importance that every local school board should consider developing a policy which would make homework an integral part of the educational program in its schools. This policy development must be undertaken with care in order to encourage the use of appropriate and reasonable amounts of homework without setting rigid requirements. The following section suggests items to be considered in developing a homework policy which will guide good educational practice but not hamper the creativity and flexibility of individual teachers.

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[1] Amitai Etzioni, "Self Discipline, Schools, and the Business Community," Final Report to the Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 1983, quoted in Deborah Burnett Strother, "Practical Applications of Research," Phi Delta Kappan, February 1984, p. 423.

[2] Michael Rutter, et. al. Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1979.

III. GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING HOMEWORK POLICIES

Homework can motivate students and promote learning. However, if it is improperly planned and not appropriate for individual students, it may be counterproductive. To assist teachers in making the most effective use of homework, a school or district policy should be developed, adopted, and communicate to all parts of the school community.

Such a policy might be prepared by administrators and put into effect after approval by the school board, but this method tends to alienate other staff, students and parents. A better method of setting policy is to involve those most affected by the policy during its development. A Homework Task Force to study homework practices and prepare a proposed district or school policy could include students, parents, teachers, administrators and school board representatives. Any of these team members may represent organized groups, and they should be encouraged to actively involve their constituencies in the policy's development.

Unlike many areas requiring adoption of a school policy there are no mandates for homework in the Pennsylvania School Code or in regulations of the State Board of Education. Therefore, it is vital both that the benefits of a homework policy be understood by everyone involved and that basic agreement on provisions of the policy be reached by all segments of the school community.

A district policy may be simply a short statement of support for the use of homework, or it may include an extended treatment of philosophy and objectives, guidelines for teachers, suggested letters for parents and handbook inserts for students, and a delineation of how much homework should be assigned at various levels. The briefest policy received from a Pennsylvania school district stated: "The Perkiomen Valley School District Board recognizes that homework is an important adjunct to the educational process. Homework serves a variety of valuable educational purposes and should be assigned on a regular basis." This may, for many school districts, be a sufficient statement of policy.

The following sections present some of the factors to be considered in developing a homework policy. Sample policies are included in the appendix, and excerpts are found throughout the text of this manual.

Philosophy and Purpose

What do we believe about homework?

Answering this question may be the most difficult, but most important, step in hammering out an acceptable homework policy for the district. The Homework Task Force, or whoever is assigned to develop a policy, must decide whether homework is important, why, and for whom, as well as the objectives to be achieved by any homework which is assigned. Because it has no basis in regulation or law, a homework policy must be based on informed educational theory and the opinions of the constituency.

Public opinion changes with circumstances, and public opinion about homework is no exception. According to a review by Strother,[3] most of us see homework as an integral part of the school experience, and this has been the popular attitude during most of our history. However, during the first decade of the 20th century, and again in the 1930's and the 1970's, homework seemed to fall from public favor. In each of those periods, homework assignments decreased; then falling grades or test scores caused the pendulum of public opinion to swing to the opposite extreme. In 1984 we are in a period of reform. The public is concerned about improving academic outcomes of schooling, and homework is regarded as one way to increase student achievement.

What has research contributed to our understanding of the value of homework? As Strother pointed out,[4] studies of homework have been scarce and results conflicting, but most educators continue to believe that regularly assigned homework enhances student achievement. She reported the results of several large research efforts, including High School and Beyond, a study of 58,000 students conducted in 1980 by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). In several studies using the NCES data, homework had a measurable effect on achievement. High performing private schools were found to require four to six more hours of homework per week than public schools, but in public schools the use of more homework was related to higher grades.

It may be of value for the Homework Task Force to survey district parents to determine their opinions about homework. Nationally, it appears that most parents expect or even demand homework. They see homework as a way to extend learning time, gain some insight into school philosophy and practice, improve students' chances for admission to good colleges and/or good jobs, and perhaps provide an opportunity for parent and child to work together. For a district homework policy to work, however, the philosophy on which it is based should reflect the beliefs of the local parents about homework.

These examples of philosophical statements have been drawn from homework policies submitted by Pennsylvania school districts:

- Homework is an integral part of almost every learning activity. The value of reinforcement is factual and valuable. Homework is a part of the evaluation (learning) process, necessarily, required by teachers of all students. (Wilkinsburg School District)

- Homework can be beneficial at all levels of a public school program, and we believe this tradition is educationally beneficial providing this practice does not conflict with the objectives of the school. Recognizing that one of the goals of this school system is development of the whole personality, we also believe it is important to allow time for co-curricular and out-of-school activities. (Abington Heights School District)

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[3] Strother, Deborah, "Homework: Too Much, Just Right or Not Enough?", Practical Applications of Research, Phi Delta Kappan, February 1984, pp. 423-426.

[4] Ibid.

- Study plays an important role in the academic experiences of each student in the Clarion Area School District. While a teacher is responsible for defining the specific role such study will play in a given student's education, the student and his/her parents must also assume their responsibilities. Cooperation and communication between the home and the school are essential if educational assignments are to make significant contribution to a student's total educational experience.

Many reasons have been offered for assigning homework. Chief among them are to increase learning time, use practice to reinforce classroom learning, and develop independence, self-discipline and good work habits. The following examples are typical of the objectives found in homework policies submitted by Pennsylvania districts:

- Work should be assigned to be completed at home:

    1. To improve skills in a basic subject.
    2. To review important items.
    3. To increase knowledge learned in the classroom.
    4. To prepare for classroom instruction.
    5. To develop the skills of research. (Abington Heights School District)

- Aims of Easton Area School District

    1. Develop individual initiatives, self-discipline, responsibilities, and independence.
    2. To encourage a carry-over of worthwhile school activities into permanent leisure interests.
    3. Help the student recognize and understand the facts, patterns, and principles in learning.
    4. Provide background experiences for classroom work.
    5. Help the student organize and condense knowledge.
    6. Enhance home/school communications and provide for increased curriculum understanding.

- Objectives of Homework (Hatboro-Horsham School District)

    1. To teach good study habits and study skills.
    2. To teach how to organize time and activities.
    3. To create a desire for self-improvement.
    4. To motivate the student to want to learn independently.
    5. To "spark" the student's curiosity and creativity.
    6. To teach responsibility and a sense of accomplishment.

- Among the objectives of home study are: (a) stimulation of initiative, independence, responsibility, and self-direction; (b) development of permanent leisure interests in learning; (c) enrichment of school experience; and (d) reinforcement of school learning by further practice and application. (Haverford Township School District)

In all these examples, homework is assigned for positive reasons. Appropriately missing is the use of homework as punishment. A number of policies specifically state that homework is neither punishment nor busywork, and it should not be assigned for disciplinary reasons.

Role of Administrators

Most homework policies submitted by Pennsylvania districts contain no specific reference to the role of administrators. An assumption can be made that administrators were involved in policy setting, and administrators usually communicated the policy through handbooks, form letters or circulars to parents, or superintendents' bulletins. In many districts, the superintendent's role in homework policy appears to have ended with the development and dissemination of the policy; in other districts, top administrators organize inservice training for all building staffs as part of policy implementation.

As the instructional leader in his/her school building, the building principal has a continuing role in policy implementation. The principal insures that staff complies with the policy, coordinates the amounts and schedule for assignments among teachers, and generally encourages reasonable use of homework. The principal should be prepared to lead teachers, individually or as a faculty, into more effective use of homework as an educational activity.

The Hatboro-Horsham School District includes the following five activities in the role of an administrator.

1. Communicate the philosophy and purpose of the Homework Guidelines to teachers, parents, and students.
2. Monitor the homework procedures with parents and among schools.
3. Develop open communication on homework with parents and among schools.
4. Coordinate homework guidelines within the departments and among teachers.
5. Evaluate periodically the consistent implementation of these guidelines.

These five duties summarize well the role of the building administrator. An additional responsibility of all administrators is the periodic reevaluation of the policy throughout the district to assure its currency and appropriateness.

Guidelines for Teachers

Teachers have a controlling role in implementing a district's homework policy. The teacher decides when, to whom and what homework will be assigned. A district may decide to include in its policy suggestions for how teachers handle the use of homework, or it may consider this to be an educational decision to be made by each teacher. In either instance, some guidelines may be useful. Guidelines included in their homework policies by some Pennsylvania districts follow:

Pennsbury School District includes guidelines for the teacher about what homework should and should not be. New Kensington-Arnold gives not only guidelines but also suggested assignments for the elementary grades. These two policies and one from I.U. 3 are included in the appendix as examples of different types of policies developed in Pennsylvania.

Pittston Area policy states: "It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to make assignments meaningful and educational. If homework is not checked and acknowledged, it has no meaning and should not be assigned."

From the Haverford Township brochure, which publicizes the district homework policy, comes a statement that the teacher should:

1. Make the purpose of the assignment clear.
2. Provide the kind of direction that will enable students to proceed independently.
3. Be aware of other demands on the student's time.
4. Evaluate/review all homework (written or otherwise) in a timely and appropriate way.
5. Communicate to the student at the beginning of the course the method of evaluation of homework and its impact on quarterly grades.
6. Use homework as a learning tool, not as a disciplinary measure.

Clarion Area delineates a dozen teacher responsibilities, some of them similar to those mentioned above but with different emphases. Their policy states that the teacher will:

1. Present all assignments clearly and concisely, the format to be followed, the standards for acceptance, and the due date.
2. Provide assignments which vary in quantity and degree of difficulty commensurate with a student's grade and course level.
3. Provide short-term assignments on a daily basis to reinforce specific skills which have been presented in class.
4. Provide long and short term assignments to encourage students to use study time wisely and efficiently.
5. Ensure that assignments are relevant to in-class activities and free of unnecessary repetition.
6. Preview assignments prior to the introduction of new work or materials.
7. Provide assignments that permit the student to demonstrate comprehension through the use of multiple media.
8. Provide opportunities, where applicable, for students to do reports, research papers or research projects which require the citing of multiple sources.
9. Assign work based on the availability of materials needed to complete a given assignment.
10. Provide swift, accurate, fair and comprehensive evaluations of assignments.
11. Consider assignments as integral parts of a student's educational program, and, therefore, a part of his nine-week grade.
12. Notify parents if a student's assignments are habitually incomplete or unsatisfactory.

In addition to guidelines similar to those quoted above, the Hatboro-Horsham district policy explains four types of homework that a teacher may use.

1. Practice assignments are given to provide the student an opportunity to continue that which has been presented and practiced in class; for example, the math teacher assigns the student additional problems for homework after the math concept has been both presented and practiced in class. (These assignments can be effective when a skill needs practice, but may become dull and counterproductive if used extensively with students who have the skill well in hand.)
2. Preparation assignments are aimed at preparing the student for the next lesson in that subject; for example, the science teacher assigns material in the textbook to read/study in order to discuss and ask questions in class. (Students should understand not only what to read but also what is to be accomplished by the reading.)
3. Extension assignments are made to extend a previously learned skill or body of knowledge; for example, the social studies teacher assigns the student to read library reference material in order to gain additional insight into the concept being studied. (Aimed at individual application, research and study, this type of assignment may be long-term and focus on student production, not merely reproduction.)
4. Creativity assignments are provided to allow a student to apply previously learned knowledge; for example, the English teacher provides an opportunity for a student to respond to a piece of literature through written, artistic, or dramatic expression.

Another important consideration concerns how much homework a teacher should assign and when. Many policies caution against overloading a student, some set minimums for various grade levels and still others suggest approximate amounts considered appropriate for various ages. Another related factor is the desirability of assigning work on weekends or during vacations. Many policies do not mention this problem at all, but policies which include it usually caution against assigning work on weekends or the last day before a vacation.

Each district must decide whether to set minimum and maximum time limits or leave the matter to the discretion of individual teachers. In districts which offer time guidelines, typical recommended minutes for total assignments in all subjects are about 30 in primary grades, 45 for intermediate, 60 in grades 7 and 8, 90 in grades 9 and 10, and 120 in grades 11 and 12. Some districts recommend more or less, suggest giving no assignments for holidays, Fridays or the days of schoolwide activities such as important sports or social events, and recommend individualization of homework assignments.

In its Parents' Guide to Homework in the Elementary Schools, the Easton Area School District suggests a progressive time line for homework each day, beginning with 10 minutes in kindergarten and first grade, adding 10 minutes each year, and building to 60 minutes in sixth grade. The guide goes on to say that the child need not have homework every night.

Millcreek Township policy cautions that "the amount of work assigned should not be burdensome for the child to complete. The teacher may periodically check the amount of time the students are spending on homework." The policy goes on to suggest "a minimum of one homework assignment per week in each letter graded subject area" at elementary level and a two per week minimum in major subject areas for secondary students.

In Wilkinsburg the appropriate times suggested are thirty minutes to an hour, four nights a week for primary children; an hour to an hour and a half, four nights a week for intermediate students; and one to two hours, four nights per week for all secondary students.

In summary, what guidelines should be set up for helping district teachers use homework as an effective part of classroom learning? The final decision should be based on the local philosophy and prevailing opinion. A policy may be used to give teachers direction and suggestions for making meaningful assignments; making certain the students understand what to do, how and why they are to do the assignment; insuring that evaluation of completed homework is part of the teacher's plan; and giving reasonable amounts of homework.

Roles of Students and Parents

Some policies merely assume that the student will do homework as assigned, but make no specific reference to roles and responsibilities of either the student or parents. Others go to great lengths to suggest ways a parent can help a student use homework to increase classroom learning. Such suggestions run the gamut from asking parents to actually help tutor the student in work which is difficult to providing time and place for the student to work at home. The Pennsbury homework committee report (included in the Appendix) contains about 12 pages of home learning activities and descriptions of various types of homework appropriate for each age level.

Districts may wish to have shorter explanations of student and parent roles in homework. Abington Heights School District merely notes that students should assume more responsibility for independent work as they progress in school; parents are not mentioned. Easton Area School District, on the other hand, includes more detail on roles of students and parents:

- Role of the student

  Each student has the responsibility to develop good work and study habits. The student, in preparing an assignment, should:

  1. Make sure he/she understands the assignment--its purpose, when it is due, how it should be done.
  2. Finding time for homework is often a matter of budgeting the time that is available. When study time is provided during the school day, the student should take advantage of it. Longterm assignments should be planned so they do not have to be done all at once.
  3. Analyze his study habits and take advantage of available study helps. Although research shows that there is no best way to study, all students do need effective study skills.

- Role of the parent

The home is a laboratory of learning. Cooperation by parents is a necessary factor in meaningful homework experience. Parents can encourage their children by showing interest and setting up helpful attitudes toward homework. They should:

1. Provide an environment conducive to study: a quiet, well-lighted place, ample work space, and necessary basic materials.
2. Help in development of a satisfactory study schedule.
3. Motivate toward best work and completion of assignments.
4. Make suggestions toward growth and independence.
5. Point out principles involved, giving illustrations.
6. Accept each child's own best work and avoid undue comparison with that of other children.
7. Attempt to understand the values of various types of homework.

Similar suggestions, including eight things a student should do and ten for parents, are included in the Haverford Township policy statement. In addition to those mentioned above, parents are urged to contact the teacher to ascertain homework practices and to contact the school when homework assignments do not appear to conform to the published policy statement. Parents are also cautioned to give only assistance that will enable a child to learn how to do the assignment; they are not to do the assignment for the child.

In deciding what discussion of student and parent responsibility will be included in a homework policy, a school district must conform to school and community expectations closely enough to achieve acceptance of the recommended policy. In general, a parent should not be expected to play the role of tutor for the pupil to complete the homework, but a parent may reasonably be expected to insist that homework is completed and to provide a time and place for doing it. Another responsibility which a district may wish to discuss as part of the student role is the matter of making up work missed during an absence. Although this is a combined responsibility of teacher and student, once the material has been assigned, it is up to the student to see that it is completed; and parents of less mature and younger children, especially, will need to provide motivation and opportunity for this task.

Policy Adoption and Implementation

When the committee's policy development work has been completed, it should submit its proposed policy to the school board for adoption. The school board may decide to adopt the entire proposal as board policy, adopt only a statement of support for homework as policy, leaving the details to become supporting administrative rules; or decide the entire process is administrative policy which does not need to be adopted by the board. In any of these cases the school board or administration may have some revisions or alterations to be made, and is likely to return the proposal to the committee with suggested changes.

After the policy is in final form and has been adopted by the board and/or the district administration, it is ready for implementation. The first step in implementation is to spread the word. All teachers and other professional staff must be informed. In many cases this will involve both presentation of the policy at a faculty meeting and distribution of a printed policy for the teachers' book of rules and regulations. If the homework policy represents a radical departure from usual district practice, inservice training to improve the effectiveness of the teachers' use of homework may be in order. Students should receive written notice of the policy as a special communication or as part of the school handbook for the school year the policy is implemented. Parents, also, need written explanations of the new policy. Districts can use letters/memos, parent handbooks, or special circulars to inform parents of this and other policies. Newspapers and other media may be used to reach parents and other community members with news of school policy changes.

Most of the policy implementation will be handled by individual teachers within their classrooms. The Homework Task Force or Policy Development Committee has successfully completed its job and may be discharged. Before disbanding, however, the committee may wish to make one more important recommendation on setting up an evaluation process. The evaluation itself should be the responsibility of the school board and district administration, but the process may be suggested by the committee. After being in force for a school year (and periodically thereafter), the policy should be examined to see whether it is in fact being implemented as written, whether it has improved learning, and whether there are suggestions for making the policy more effective or more reasonable.

IV. CHECKLIST

The following checklist may be of help to a district in developing a policy on homework. The administrator in charge of the process may use it to keep track of completed steps in policy development, and may also use it as a planning document.

	Date Completed	Person Responsible
1. Policy Development Committee or Task Force has been selected to insure wide representation. It includes:	_____	_____

	Yes	No
Teachers	___	___
Parents	___	___
Students	___	___
Administrators	___	___
School Board Members	___	___

2. Team has agreed on a philosophy and purpose for homework.	_____	_____
3. Roles and responsibilities of each group are defined.	_____	_____

	Yes	No
Administration	___	___
Teachers	___	___
Students	___	___
Parents	___	___

4. Implementation plan is set up, including methods of communicating the policy to all part of the school community.	_____	_____
5. Evaluation procedures are established.	_____	_____
6. Homework policy is adopted.	_____	_____

APPENDIX

SAMPLE POLICIES

ALLEGHENY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

HOMEWORK POLICIES

HOMEWORK

Definition

Homework is properly defined as any work planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher.

Philosophy

We believe:

1. Assigning homework is an acceptable practice. It becomes an essential part of the total education of the student when it provides the opportunity for the student to:

   A. Practice, apply, integrate, or extend school learning.
   B. Reinforce independent work-study skills.
   C. Use school and community resources.
   D. Develop self-discipline.

2. Home work must be based on student needs, capabilities, and/or interests.

3. Each teacher, student, and parent has a responsibility for insuring the success of homework assignments:

   A. The teacher for following district and departmental guidelines when assigning homework.
   B. The student for completing the assignments according to the criteria established by or with the teacher.
   C. The parent for providing the work area, time, and conditions necessary for the student to complete the assignments.

Homework Objectives:

1. To reinforce learning through the practice, application, integration, and/or extension of knowledges and skills.
2. To develop study skills, work habits, and a sense of personal responsibility so that the student may become an independent learner.
3. To stimulate originality and creativity.
4. To enrich school experiences and encourage a carryover into leisure and career-centered interests.

Guidelines

In assigning homework, the teacher will:

1. Insure that the students have the skills necessary to complete the assignment independently.

2. Determine that the students clearly understand what is expected of them.
3. Base the assignment on the students' states of maturity and academic development.
4. Consider the availability and accessibility of necessary materials in terms of location of materials, times material is available, and number of students needing the same material.
5. Recognize that students have other academic, cultural, and social commitments that require their time, attention, and commitment and that are of benefit to them.
6. Make every effort to give assignments sufficiently in advance of due dates to enable students to incorporate them into their personal schedules.
7. Use discretion when routine assignments are made for completion over weekends or holidays.
8. Use all assignments as vehicles for instruction and/or evaluation.
9. Avoid grading assignments intended to provide practice, reinforcement, or maintenance of knowledges and skills which are primarily designed for use as vehicles for instruction.
10. Determine whether assignments made for application, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation of these knowledges and skills should be graded.

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES BEGINNING FALL OF 1983

In order to implement the policies and guidelines developed by the district committee, certain responsibilities are required on the part of each unit, school or department, individual student, teacher, and parent. Thus, the general philosophy and guidelines can take on the specificity necessary for action. These responsibilities are listed below.

I. District Responsibilities

- A. Provide for a periodic, systematic review of district philosophy and guidelines.
- B. Provide information about the latest research and other studies.
- C. Provide for the dissemination of positive homework practices and procedures.
- D. Arrange for methods by which feedback can be gathered from students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- E. Support the practices and procedures adopted by the units and/or departments.

II. Unit Principal Responsibilities

- A. Arrange for one faculty meeting to have guidelines explained and questions answered. (Elementary decision: Will this be accomplished on a district or building level?)
- B. Middle School and High School
  1. Assign responsibility to departments to write specific practices and procedures to implement guidelines and procedures.
  2. Coordinate the practices and procedures of the various departments.

C. Prepare a summary report for the superintendent based on the actions taken in B.
D. Arrange for the procedures by which the general and specific guidelines, policies, practices, and procedures are explained to the students.
E. Arrange for the procedures by which the general and specific guidelines, policies, practices, and procedures are explained to the parents.
F. Develop procedures for determining the degree to which the philosophy and guidelines are being implemented.
G. Arrange for the orientation of personnel new to the district.
H. Arrange for a periodic review of practices and procedures.
I. Support the philosophy and guidelines of the district committee and department or school committees through conferencing, provision of resources, and in-servicing.
J. Support the practices and procedures adopted by the unit.
K. Arrange for methods by which feedback can be gathered from students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

III. Department Responsibilities

(These also are intended for the elementary schools.)

A. Conduct a review of present homework practices.
B. Examine practices in comparison to the adopted district philosophy and guidelines.
C. Discuss types of homework assignments made and analyze them in regard to categories enumerated in the philosophy and guidelines -- practice, application, integration, and extension. Determine balance or imbalance. Discuss the place and importance of each type.
D. Establish guidelines, practices, and procedures in accord with the district guidelines and policy.
E. Establish a program by which the actions taken in D above are periodically reviewed.

IV. Individual Teacher Responsibilities

A. Become familiar with the district and departmental or school philosophy and guidelines.
B. Evaluate present practice in regard to adopted district guidelines.
C. Develop a record keeping system that will reflect the intent of the district and unit or department guidelines.
D. Make the students aware of long and short term goals of assignments.
E. Provide a means to make the parents aware of student's operating in regard to homework assignments.
F. Be willing to compromise in order to make unit or department practices and procedures consistent.
G. Support the unit or department decision about practices and procedures.
H. Be held accountable for assignments made.

I. Establish penalties for not completing assignments through discussion with the students.
J. Give students adequate directions including the purposes and procedures for the assignment.
K. Provide alternative procedures for students to get help or get missed assignments. Make them known to the students.
L. Develop criteria by which homework will be evaluated. Either develop them with the students or make them known to the students.
M. Provide feedback to the department or unit in regard to difficulties encountered in implementing the guidelines.
N. Inform or involve the librarian in any assignment when collecting, grouping, or reserving materials which will benefit students in completing the assignment.

V. Student Responsibilities

A. Budget time to complete assignments made.
B. Arrange to make-up missed assignments as required by the teacher.
C. Ask for further explanation if original directions are not completely understood.
D. Develop a personal system for remembering and/or recording assignments.
E. Initiate the request for help when needed.
F. Be familiar with the philosophy and guidelines of the district and the specific policies and practices of the unit and/or department.

VI. Parent Responsibilities

A. Become familiar with district and unit or departmental philosophy and guidelines.
B. Provide feedback to the school regarding problems such as time, difficulty, and progress.
C. Encourage and seek to motivate the student to fulfill his responsibilities as outlined above.
D. Provide the work atmosphere conducive to and time necessary for completion of assignments.

HOMEWORK AT PENNSBURY

The Report and Recommendations
of the
Elementary and Secondary Homework Committee

January 1982

Dr. C. Meade Beers, Superintendent
Dr. Joseph Farese, Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction

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REPORT OF THE HOMEWORK COMMITTEE

History and Description of Activities

With the renewal of the trend to improve pupils' basic skills performance in recent years has come also renewed interest in behavior that enhances learning.

Homework--assigned by teachers to be completed by pupils--is one of those behaviors. Parents and teachers, citing data that indicates students who continue in-school learning in home learning activities achieve notably better than those who do not, expressed interest in examining the issue of homework at Pennsbury.

A committee composed of elementary and secondary staff chaired jointly by Sidney Oppenheimer, Director of Elementary Education, and Joyce Bourg, English Coordinator, K-12, was appointed to examine homework as extant and submit recommendations for that part of the educational program at Pennsbury.

For a period of two years the committee engaged in activities related to the study of homework. Outcomes of the study were these:

1. Review and summary of literature and research about homework and its relationship to pupil achievement.
2. Survey and analysis of staff attitudes about homework.
3. Composition of a philosophy and objectives for homework at Pennsbury.
4. Consensus recommendation that a policy prescribing the purpose, frequency, quantity or type of meaningful homework is unenforceable, impractical and not necessarily contributive to improvement of pupil achievement.
5. Consensus recommendation that the regular assignment and completion of homework purposefully designed to supplement in-school learning should be an integral part of the educational program at Pennsbury.
6. Composition of guidelines for teachers for effective homework assignments.
7. Composition of a letter to parents of elementary school children to encourage their cooperation in home learning activities for their children.
8. Identification of homework and home learning activities for all levels of the educational program at Pennsbury.

In this report are the specific products resulting from the Committee's two-year study.

HOMEWORK AT PENNSBURY

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

Philosophy

We believe that homework at Pennsbury should provide activities to integrate the efforts of school and home to extend the physical, intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, social and moral growth of every child.

We believe also that homework should reinforce school learning, provide practice, and expand application of knowledge and skills according to the individual academic, career, and leisure time needs and goals of every child.

Objectives

1. That homework should be individualized for the needs of each child.
2. That homework should be a natural and meaningful outgrowth of classroom activity with flexibility in quantity and purpose.
3. That homework standards and purposes should be clearly established by the teacher and understood by students and parents.
4. That homework should stimulate home-school communication and encourage parents to provide:
   - A. Suitable environment for study.
   - B. Interest and assistance.
   - C. Adjustment of activities and appointments
   - D. Home literature and materials (encyclopedia, dictionary, newspapers, atlas, writing tools).
   - E. Selective listening and TV viewing.
   - F. family enrichment activities.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

The Homework Committee identified the following guidelines for homework to be an effective bridge between directed learning experiences in the school and increased parent cooperation toward improvement of student learning.

Homework should -

1. Stimulate voluntary effort, initiative, independence, responsibility, and self-direction.
2. Be individualized to build on each student's skill development and/or interests.
3. Sometimes be cooperatively designed by student and teacher.
4. Reinforce school learning by necessary practice, integration, or application.
5. Be clearly structured with clear purpose.
6. Be of length appropriate to purpose.
7. Be realistic in scope and complexity.
8. Be reasonable in quantity and requirements in relationship to homework assignments for other subjects or courses, holidays, and activity participation.

9. Identify and assure provision of special materials or supplies needed for assignment completion.
10. Provide information to parents about students' educational program and their progress in it.
11. Encourage parent interest and assistance without requiring parent instruction.
12 Provide opportunity for home enhancement of school learning, skills, and interests.
13. Discourage copying or plagiarizing work for successful completion
14. Encourage carry-over of worthwhile school activities to permanent leisure interests.
15. Be checked to observe learning, suggest teaching emphasis, and give value to the task.

Homework should <u>not</u> -

1. Be used as punishment, include unnecessary drill, or be busy work.
2. Require that the student has special skills not learned previously.
3. Create tension, frustration, anxiety.
4. Presume availability of home facilities, crayons, paper, dictionary, thesaurus, maps, encyclopedia, study area, parental aid or supervision.
5. Usurp after-school time for constructive use in expanding personal interests, developing special talents, engaging in beneficial recreation or jeopardize necessary rest period.

C. Meade Beers, Ed.D.
District Superintendent

Joseph Farese, Ed.D.
Asst. District Superintendent

Robert R. Kling
Business Administrator

PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Yardley Avenue, Post Office Box 338
Fallsington, Pennsylvania 19054
Telephone (215) 295-4131

Dear Parents:

This letter is to urge your cooperation in establishing homework to help your child's school achievement and to develop suggestions to help your child to complete homework assignments effectively:

1. Provide a quiet, well-lighted study area with a desk or table and comfortable chair. (A soft chair may be ideal for reading assignments but not helpful for use at desk or table.)

2. Keep study tools available: pencils, sharpener, pen, crayons, paper, ruler, dictionary. (An atlas, encyclopedia and globe of the world are valuable at-home aids also.)

3. Establish a regular time for homework. (Although home activities and appointments may require change of homework time, consistency helps to make study at home a regular habit of learning. For the primary child especially, doing homework immediately after school may be inadvisable since he/she may need the change of pace of rest or play.)

4. Limit television viewing and avoid TV or radio listening during study time. (Soft music may contribute to concentration on occasion, but popular favorites tend to distract attention from homework).

5. Inquire about your child's homework and help him/her to budget time for completion and ample sleep. (Observe sight and hearing habits that might suggest physical needs.)

6. Encourage step-by-step work on long term or major projects to avoid last-minute, careless work.

7. At his/her request, help your child with homework tasks and show your interest in successful completion. Do not do the work for your child.

8. Share your own interest in reading, writing, learning or special talents with your child to show that you value learning.

9. Encourage your child to practice learning skills in home chores: shopping, home and yard care, personal belongings, care of pets.

10. Consider family trips and vacations that provide enrichment learning experiences.

With cooperative home and school effort, we look forward to his/her learning progress.

Sincerely,

KINDERGARTEN - HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Homework for kindergarten children can help them in readiness skills of thinking, language, number and motor skills. Short and varied (10-15 minutes) homework activities should maintain the fun of learning, repeating and supplementing in-school learning. Here are suggestions to help them to continue their in-school learning with you.

Motor, Language, Number, Thinking Skills

1. Encourage children to make booklets (cutting and pasting).
   - A. Of the same color posted on a page and naming the color on each page.
   - B. Of different numbers of objects and tell the number on each page.
   - C. Of pets, transportation, holidays, foods, fruit, vegetables with names of objects on pictures.
   - D. Of pictures of objects starting with each letter of the alphabet.
2. Help children to practice using pencils and crayons.
   - A. Drawing and naming animals, buildings, toys.
   - B. Coloring books and selecting appropriate colors for the objects to be colored.
   - C. Staying with the lines.
3. Help children to be secure in knowing personal information.
   - A. Knowing and saying clearly name, address (including city or town and state) telephone number.
   - B. Lettering own names; recognizing and using upper and lower case letters.
   - C. Using upper case letters for the first letter of name.
4. Help children to learn to follow directions and develop responsibility.
   - A. Give them directions and urge them to complete the task.
   - B. Assign them personal and household chores: dressing themselves; caring for clothing; washing/drying dishes; setting table; caring for pets.
5. Help children to build observing, perceiving, and thinking skills.
   - A. From pictures, ask them what they see, what is happening, what might have happened before, what may happen in the future.
   - B. Ask them to explain differences and similarities of shapes, sizes, weights, distances.
   - C. Have them share sensory responses: sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, inner feelings.
6. Plan shared family experiences.
   - A. Vacations, trips to farms, zoo, historical places, parks, recreation sites, seeing and talking about them, choosing favorites.
   - B. Special read-aloud time for nursery rhymes, poems, stories.
   - C. Sharing school experiences.

FIRST LEVEL - HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Activities for children at first level can help them not only to reinforce specific motor, reading and language arts and number skills, but also to begin to develop good work habits of neatness and correctness. Here are specific suggestions to help your children in short (10-20 minutes) at-home learning times.

Motor Skills

1. Encourage children to make booklets (cutting and pasting).
   - A. Of words learned in reading and seatwork activities
   - B. Of numbers learned in arithmetic work
   - C. By practicing forms of letters
   - D. By observing lines and spaces
   - E. By holding pencils correctly
   - F. By coloring pictures and staying in lines

Reading and Language Arts

1. Review with children school work in reading and writing.
   - A. Words learned in reading and seatwork activities
   - B. Practicing forms of letters
   - C. Becoming aware of lines and spaces
   - D. Making letters touch lines
   - E. Holding pencil correctly
   - F. Re-writing papers neatly
   - G. Reviewing homework booklets
2. Have children tell stories in sequence from a picture book.
3. Have children "read pictures" explaining the stories they tell.
4. Plan "read aloud" time for children to share ideas about rhymes and stories.

Arithmetic

Have children practice counting objects in surroundings, on trips, in pictures.

SECOND LEVEL - HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

So that learning your child starts at school is continued at home, plan some time to work with your children each day. Here are suggestions to include in that time with your children (in 15-25 minute sessions).

General

1. Urge your children to develop neatness about everything: their personal habits, their homework papers, putting things away.
2. Provide practice in listening to follow directions.
3. Communicate with your children.
   - A. Talk to them and listen to them.
   - B. Discuss your children's interests, experiences, feelings.
   - C. Watch and talk together about selected TV programs.
4. Continue to stress your children's development of personal and family responsibilities: in caring for personal needs and belongings; in completing household chores on time.

Reading and Language Arts

1. READING SKILL GAMES
   - A. Word opposites: in-out; up-down
   - B. Compound words: can-cannot; in-into
   - C. Adding endings: laugh-laughed-laughing
   - D. Find little words in big ones: button-but-to-on-ton
   - E. Rhyming Words: bat-cat-sat-fat
   - F. Cut out pictures and group in categories.
2. PHONICS
   - A. Review beginning consonants of words: all words that start with B ball-bug-bumble bee.
   - B. Encourage children to pronounce word endings clearly.
   - C. Encourage children to make picture dictionaries of words that start alike, end alike, some blends - fly, break.
   - D. Have children find vowel sounds and find pictures of objects with the vowels in their names.
3. SPELLING
   - A. Help children study spelling word lists for a short time each night.
   - B. Help children review spelling words to retain those already learned.
   - C. Discuss word meanings with your children.
4. HANDWRITING
   - A. Encourage children to practice writing letters of the alphabet.
   - B. Encourage and praise neat handwriting.

Arthmetic

1. Help children practice orally addition and subtraction number combinations.
2. Have children make number combination flash cards.
3. Have children make change using real money, practicing money values from 25¢ to $1.00.

4. Use an old clock or have a child make a clock to practice telling time moving the hands to show hour, half hour, quarter hour. (A paper plate and straws can be used to make a clock.)

Science, Social Studies, Health

1. Help children find pictures, materials, information about units of work they are doing in each of these subjects.

Social Studies, Sciences, Health

1. Together with your children, read news events, talk about and look up new words and places.
2. Encourage use of available home reference sources.
3. Use maps and globes to plan and discuss trips, current events, homes of relatives.
4. Encourage good personal health habits.
5. Watch, discuss, and evaluate TV shows about topics they are studying in these areas.

THIRD LEVEL - HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

So that learning your children start at school is continued at home, include some time in your day to help your children continue their learning with you--at home, in car, on shopping trips, at mealtime. Here are specific suggestions to help your children reinforce in-school learning (in 15-30 minute sessions).

General

1. Help children to practice giving directions, listening to directions and following them.
2. Discuss school work brought home; praise and display good work.
3. When your children are assigned reports, help them to find information without finding it for them. Encourage them to write their reports in their own words and to read over what they write.
4. Continue to urge children to be concerned about neatness in their personal habits, doing their homework, caring for their belongings.
5. Encourage children to check over all their work and to proofread all their assignments.

Reading and Language Arts

1. Encourage your children to read library books independently.
2. Make reading a "family affair."
3. Play games to develop reading skills:
   a. homonyms - for-four-fore
   b. synonms - large-huge-gigantic
   c. antonyms - kind-unkind
   d. alphabetical order - arrange grocery list, family names, dinner menu
   e. syllables - how many do you hear? absolutely?
4. Encourage use of dictionary as a tool for word meaning, spelling, syllabication, reference information.
5. Help your children to use correct spoken language.
6. Encourage children to write personal letters to express thanks, experiences, with distant relative.
7. Encourage children to write stories and poems to share with you.
8. Practice spelling words with your children.

Arithmetic

1. Encourage children to do brief practice drills of facts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
2. Help children to practice problems like those in class.
3. Let children help with shopping: How much spent? Which product is cheaper? How much money do we need to buy shoes, pants, and shirt?
4. Encourage children to measure home objects: rooms, tiles, curtains, liquid and dry cooking ingredients.
5. Help children to estimate distances, prices, time, heights, weights.

FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH LEVEL - HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

At levels 4, 5 and 6, home learning activities may include predominantly tasks assigned in school to be completed as homework. MONITOR TASKS CHILDREN HAVE TO DO. Parents can contribute especially by reinforcing the development of good study habits like these and helping children to budget homework time needed for each subject (from 30 minutes to an hour).

1. Planning time to do assigned tasks neatly, correctly, and on time.
2. Finding and using tools and information to complete tasks.
3. Reviewing material already learned to apply to new tasks.

CONDITIONS and MATERIALS in the home that may help children to complete homework effectively are these:

1. A quiet place to study with a limit on distractions: TV, stereo.
2. Dictionary, encyclopedia, atlas, globe, ruler and/or metric measure, thesaurus (dictionary of synonyms) newspapers, magazine.

FAMILY EXPERIENCES that will continue to make the home an important partner in children's learning progress are these:

1. Parent interest and inquiry about school work.
2. Family praise for achievements that builds children's confidence in their own worth.
3. Shared family conversation and concern for good speech habits.
4. Shared family activities like trips to libraries, theaters, concerts, museums, historical sites.

Reading and Language Arts

1. Enroll children in public library to encourage independent reading: biographies, science fiction, sports, hobbies, special interests.
2. Encourage use of dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopedia to extend knowledge and spelling and vocabulary skills in reading, speaking, and writing.
3. Consider books and magazine subscriptions as gifts to build children's personal libraries.
4. Encourage children to write letters to friends and relatives and to obtain information.
5. Involve children in seeking out household information from Yellow Pages, from travel brochures, for home building projects.
6. Help children to review and practice spelling words.
7. Encourage children to proofread all written work and to read aloud to the family stories and reports they write.

Arithmetic

1. Help children to review and to master basic facts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
2. Help children to practice and apply class work concepts:
   a. fractions - measurement functions
   b. decimals - money

c. geometry - shapes, circumference, radius, diameter
d. estimate - distance, height, weight
e. metric measurements

Social Studies, Science, and Health

1. Have children do research to plan family trips or vacations:
   a. Selecting interesting sites for the whole family.
   b. Identifying surrounding geography.
   c. Estimating admissions, highway, food, fuel, lodging costs.
   d. Investigating appropriate lodging facilities.
   e. Reporting on weather or climate.
   f. Determining practical route and/or transportation.
2. Share home, plant and animal care and information with children: gardening, pets, lawn care, energy saving.
3. Have children plan menus appropriate to family nutritional needs.
4. Encourage good personal health habits: teeth, hair, regular exercise.
5. Learn about drugs and behavior related to drug abuse and know your children's friends.

HOMEWORK ON SECONDARY LEVELS

On the secondary levels, homework aims not only to extend knowledge and skills included in the instruction of each subject, but also to provide experiences for students to apply what they have learned in review or completion of subject-related tasks.

Progressively, secondary homework assignments presume greater independent responsibility for students to demonstrate their learning progress. Work begun in class, under teacher direction, is expected to be completed effectively at home or in study halls when included in students' schedules. Reports, projects, and other subject-related tasks may well require step-by-step assignments toward culmination of the final product.

Parents' inquiry about homework and monitoring of their children in doing their work contribute greatly to the development of good study habits and to the quality of the final product. Positive home concern for students' completing assignments helps to prevent the shoddiness of night-before-due-date haste, and encourages careful planning and budgeting of time so that the outcome truly represents the students' best efforts. Assessment of students who achieve well reveals that two factors especially contribute to their success: regular completion of assigned homework and parents' interest in their children's progress. The correlation of these two factors is evident. Teacher efforts to assign meaningful homework as extension of classroom learning is futile without parental support.

Characteristics of effective parent support are these:

1. Inquiring from children and teachers about classroom work, homework, and students' learning progress.
2. Establishing regular study time nightly from 15 minutes to one hour per subject, adjusting length according to assignments.
3. Helping children to establish priorities to accommodate assignment due dates.
4. Providing a quiet, well-lights area and home learning resources: dictionary, encyclopedia, writing materials.
5. Requiring evidence that assigned work has been carefully completed.

HOMEWORK AND HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES - SECONDARY

Homework for subjects studied on secondary levels usually requires application of general study skills as well as those specific skills related to learning each subject. Below are lists of homework typical of each subject and suggested home learning activities that contribute to good achievement.

Subject	Homework	Home Learning Activities
A. English	1. Spelling lists, vocabulary	Study and review of assigned words; write from dictation of family member; look up meaning; write interesting sentences using new words.
	2. Grammar exercises	Review handbook information, complete and check exercises.
	3. Review class notes, information for quizzes, tests	Organize notes; update and re-copy if needed; parent-student question/answer sessions.
	4. Completing projects	Organize information and materials; budget time for tasks; periodic check on completion progress.
	5. Oral reports, speeches	Prepare and practice at home; family criticism for improvement.
	6. Reading or completing literature started in class	List and look up new words in glossary; note-taking important characters, places, events, actions.
	7. Writing assignments: complete sentences, paragraphs, essays, reports, poems, stories	Write rough draft, proof spelling, punctuation, capitalization, repeated words, sense, interest; family members read aloud; student read aloud; use dictionary, thesaurus for right word meaning; use of libraries, people, other sources, revising rough draft; recopying for neatness, margins, legibility.
B. Foreign Language	1. Structured assignments of language study: vocabulary grammar, listening comprehension.	Review assignments for follow-up or spot quizzes, tape conversation to improve pronunciation; maintain and update notebook.
	2. Study of literature, history, and culture of language.	Visit sites related to language, culture: museums, art, food.

Subject	Homework	Home Learning Activities
C. Mathematics	1. Reading text information	Take notes of key ideas; review information; memorize appropriate facts.
	2. Assigned problems	Do problems; check computation and/or solution; explain process, organize homework assignments for review.
D. Science	1. Read text information	Review and define key terms.
	2. Experiments	Review procedures; practice accuracy; use community facilities: libraries, museums, laboratories. Have students explain scientific information.
E. Social Studies	1. Read text information	List and define key vocabulary; use appendix and glossary for understanding laws, bills, concepts; practice interviewing family members to obtain information; plan bulletin board displays.
	2. Geography and map skills: graphs, charts, resources	Use atlas, maps, to identify areas of study and sites of events; read and report on news events.
	3. Report on people, places	Visit libraries, select people, places of interest and study; read biographies, fiction, centered on real events.

SPECIAL AREAS: FINE ARTS, HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, PRACTICAL ARTS

Fine Arts

To stimulate interest, talent and appreciation, home learning activities in the Fine Arts are significant. Activities to supplement the educational program in developing children's aesthetic discrimination are these:

a. Family visits to art museums, concerts, ballets, music theater.
b. Encouragement in learning to sing and/or play musical instruments and monitoring practice sessions and care of instruments.
c. Encouragement of children's creativity in development of perception, perspective, color, line, and application of them in at-home activities.
d. Availability of books, records, and other Fine Arts source materials for home use.

Health and Physical Education

Home learning activities may well supersede the educational program in developing and maintaining good health and physical growth. Family support toward physical well being are evident in these:

a. Nutritional individual and family diets.
b. Cleanliness and good grooming.
c. Regular dental and medical examinations.
d. Individual and family recreational activities.
e. Awareness and observation to prevent drug use and abuse.
f. Evident family values for a sound mind in a sound body.

Practical Arts

Although the Practical Arts may well initiate interest in vocational skills, in the educational program they aim to develop skills for use beyond the classroom. To assist development in such skills, home learning activities like these contribute effectively:

a. Economical selection and proper use of tools, utilities, home resources.
b. Observing and requiring safe and responsible use of tools, appliances, and materials.
c. Opportunity for children's involvement in home tasks to improve Practical Arts skills: clothing repair, table setting, toy repair.
d. Involvement of children in planning, budgeting, designing home facilities and modification.

NEW KENSINGTON-ARNOLD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HOMEWORK POLICY

NEW KENSINGTON-ARNOLD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY GRADES

HOMEWORK POLICY

In order to provide a more unified plan of procedure in assigning home studies, the elementary grades have adopted the following policy concerning homework.

I. Definition of Homework

A. Homework is a continuation of a learning process developed in the classroom and carried on by the pupil independently. Its effectiveness depends upon careful planning by pupil and teacher.

II. Purposes

A. To promote good study habits.
B. To develop self-direction and responsibility for working independently.
C. To aid in mastery of a skill.
D. To provoke creativeness.
E. To act as a stimulant towards new learning.
F. To reinforce knowledge.
G. To inform the parents of the work going on in the classroom and provide a bond of cooperation.

III. Primary Grades - Grades 1, 2, and 3

A. Recommended Time Allotments
1. Assignments should not exceed 20 minutes.
B. Suggested Homework Assignments
1. Homework for grades 1 and 2 should not be of a formal nature.
2. It may be enrichment experiences through related home activities.
3. Assignments will be given to individuals or small groups as needed.

GRADE I:

a. Magazine pictures for sounds
b. Spelling words
c. Reading aids
d. Library books
e. Other editions of basic readers

GRADE II

a. Arithmetic flash cards
b. Spelling words and applications
c. Library books
d. Collection of magazine pictures for use in Science, Health, Social Studies and Reading
e. Other editions of basic readers

GRADE III:

a. Arithmetic flash cards
b. Arithmetic examples and problems in specific skills
c. Spelling words
d. Creative writing
e. Research
f. Recreational reading
g. Other editions of basic readers

IV. Intermediate Grades - Grades 4, 5, and 6

A. Recommended Time Allotments

1. Grade IV
   a. 30 minutes - one or more subjects to be assigned three times a week but not to exceed total time.
2. Grade V
   a. 45 minutes - one or more subjects three times a week but not to exceed total time.
3. Grade VI
   a. 45 minutes - one or more subjects three times a week but not to exceed total time.

B. Suggested Homework Assignments

1. In assigning homework, the teacher should consider the out-of-school activities and needs and interests of children.
2. Homework assignments should be given during the class period of which they are a part.
3. Assignments should be given as carefully as any in the classroom.
4. Assignments should become a part of the next day's work; such as a review, discussion, test or further study.
5. Homework should not depend upon references pupils do not have readily available.
6. Assignments over weekends and holidays should not be given, unless it is work to be done over a long period of time, such as essays and projects.
7. The amount of work given will depend on the group or individual.
8. Have a definite purpose in mind to justify any assignment.
9. Always correct the returned work.

10. Never assign homework as "busy work" or for punishment purposes. This is abuse and the child associates it as such.

GRADE IV

a. Arithmetic - problems to follow-up a new concept explained in class; tables-multiplication, division, etc.
b. Spelling - words for study.
c. Social Studies - essay type questions which require reading to find the answer.
d. Language - paragraph assignments employing fundamentals of good usage.
e. Reading - exercises in phonetic and structural analysis.

GRADE V

a. Reading - exercises in phonetic and structural analysis.
b. Problems in research, using dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.
c. Science projects can often be worked out at home and brought to class.
d. Language - correct usage, compositions.
e. Arithmetic - problem solving, fraction work.

GRADE VI

a. Arithmetic - examples and problems in specific skills.
b. Spelling - use of words in sentences.
c. Reading - exercises in phonetic and structural analysis.
d. Language - correct usage, compositions.
e. Social Studies - projects, charts, graphs, outline.

In the elementary grades the immediate purposes of homework may vary for different children. Always, it is the quality of the homework that is important--not the quantity. In many instances, working conditions in the school room are often more favorable than home conditions. In view of this, most work should be done in school under the supervision of the teacher. Homework is the little "added touch" to increase a child's skill and ability in his schoolwork.

NEW KENSINGTON-ARNOLD

SECONDARY SCHOOL

HOMEWORK PHILOSOPHY

The administration and faculty of Valley High School have an affirmative viewpoint on the utilization of homework in specific areas, especially in the solid academic fields.

Homework should be assigned to develop responsibility, cooperation, parental relationship to the school, and student growth in the specific area.

Homework should be assigned on the following basis:

1. Students are given an opportunity to perform individually.
2. Ability and interests of students are challenged.
3. Homework time necessary should be anticipated by the teacher.
4. Assignments should be explained thoroughly by the teacher.
5. Due credit should be given to homework and not used as busy work.
6. Correlate previously acquired information and skills with new information and skills.
7. Teachers should use discretion when assigning homework over holidays.